

Application No. 09/339,959
Reply to Office Action of August 1, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 are presently active, Claims 1, 12, and 14 having been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1 and 15 were objected to due to informalities. Claims 1, 2, 12, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable by Morimatsu et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,563,604). Claims 3, 6, 7, and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Morimatsu et al in view of Toshiaki et al (EP Pat. No. 0 820 187). Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Morimatsu et al in view of Li et al (U.S. Pat. No. 6,563,604). Claims 9, 10, 13, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Morimatsu et al in view of Shiau et al (U.S. Pat. No. 5,880,857). Claim 11 was objected to for being dependent from a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include any limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Firstly, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claim 11.

Secondly, Applicants submit herewith a certified English translation of priority document Jap. Pat. Appl. No. 10-196793, filed in the Japanese Patent Office on June 26, 1998. The English translation supports fully in Figures 11 and 19 therein the claimed features clarified in the previous amendment filed on April 30, 2003. Upon filing the present

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application, a certified copy of Jap. Pat. Appl. No. 10-196793 and a request for (and claim to) priority was filed. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the applied primary art reference of Morimatsu et al with a U.S. filing date of June 1, 1999, does not antedate the present application. Hence, Morimatsu et al should be removed as prior art.

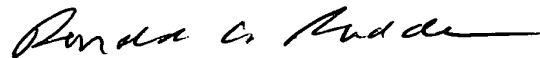
Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 9, and 12-15 and the claims dependent therefrom patentably define over the applied prior art. Hence, Claims 1, 12, and 15 have been amended to address the informalities identified in the outstanding Office Action.

Finally, attached herewith are the corrected drawings requested in the Office Action based on approved drawing corrections filed previously.

Hence, with no remaining objections or rejections, it is respectfully submitted that the application, as amended herewith, is believed to be in a condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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